

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Kuspuk School District****Federal Tax ID: XX-XXXXXXX****Project Title:**

# Kuspuk School District - Joseph and Olinga Gregory School Project Cost Overruns

**State Funding Requested: \$ 400,000****House District: 38 - S**

One-Time Need

**Brief Project Description:**

Due to unforeseen construction costs in building a new school, funds are requested to complete project and ground contamination clean up.

**Funding Plan:****Total Cost of Project: \$3,900,000**Funding SecuredOther Pending RequestsAnticipated Future Need*Amount FY**Amount FY**Amount FY*

There is no other funding needed

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

The current Joseph and Olinga Elementary School is located in Upper Kalskag and serves students from Upper and Lower Kalskag. There are structural problems, the eroding riverbank threatens the existing well, there is not legal DEC separation between the existing well and the existing sewer and the site is too small to correct the unsafe conditions.

Nearing completion of the new school, the contractor notified the school district very recently that completion of the project requires an additional \$400,000 for contaminated ground clean up to meet the needs of the community.

**Project Timeline:**

ongoing until spring 2009

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Kuspuk School District

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Contact Name: Marty Laster, Superintendent

Phone Number: 675-4250

Address: PO Box 49 Aniak, AK 99557

Email: mlaster@kuspuk.org

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No

# KUSPUK SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Dr. Martin Laster**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
(907) 675-4250, Ext. #103

April 1, 2008

Representative Mary Nelson  
State Capitol, Rm 415  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Nelson:

As you requested, I am forwarding background information on the Kalskag Project intended to replace the Joseph and Olinga Gregory School. Noted in the attachment are the reasons why it was funded by Federal Impact Aid Construction Funds as an emergency. These include:

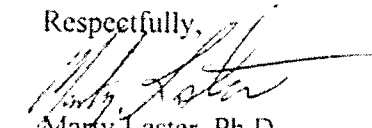
River Erosion  
Structural Problems  
Water Contamination-Trace elements of Carbon Tetra-Chloride, known Carcinogen  
DEC Requirements for site infrastructure separation

The timing of this request for \$300,000 to \$400,000 is based upon the contractor notifying us on March 28<sup>th</sup> that the company can no longer build the school for 3.6 million dollars. After cutting the small gym, moving to a flat roof, cutting storage and entry space and downsizing the mechanical, they have informed us that the facility can only be built for 3.9+ million dollars.

It is the hope of the district that we can receive this additional funding through the capital projects bill or related legislation.

Thanks so much for your willingness to advocate for the children in Kalskag.

Respectfully,



Marty Laster, Ph.D.  
Superintendent, KSD

## J&O Elementary Emergency Construction Impact Aid Grant Narrative

Describe: (1) the emergency condition; (2) how the emergency condition adversely affects the health, safety and well-being of occupants of the school facility; (3) the amount of square footage to be added to the school facility, if any; (4) the age of the facility systems associated with this project (e.g. roofing, plumbing, HVAC, windows, electrical, etc.); (5) actions the applicant has taken to respond to the emergency condition and why the applicant has been unable to resolve the condition; (6) how the proposed project will address the emergency condition; and (7) the proposed project and budget.

The Joseph & Olinga Elementary School building was originally built as a BIA school in 1941. The Kuspuk School District took over the school's operation when the Rural Education Attendance Areas were set up in Alaska in 1976. A major renovation occurred in 1981 which included an interior remodel, upgrading of electrical, heating and plumbing systems, roofing and outside siding. Additionally, the windows were replaced six years ago, the hot water heater was replaced three years ago, and the siding replaced in 1991.

The building is currently leased from the State Department of Education. The lease is renewed annually with no expiration date.

The proposed project will replace the currently operated facility, which is deteriorating and has an overdeveloped site. The intended facility will provide space for a comprehensive elementary education program for up to 63 students in grades 4-6. Because of the lack of space, the facility is now used as a K-1 school with present population at approximately 30 students.

The Joseph & Olinga Gregory Elementary School is located in Upper Kalskag, Alaska and serves students from Upper and Lower Kalskag, two small villages with a total population of between 600-700. The two villages are connected by three miles of road. Impact Aid Federal Property data is reported as combined for the Upper Kalskag and Lower Kalskag townsites.

The existing Joseph & Olinga Gregory Elementary School site is over built. The eroding riverbank threatens the existing well. There is not a legal separation between the existing well and the existing sewer. The site is too small to correct the unsafe conditions which are also in violation of the State of Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation regulations. Site constraints do not allow for required separations even with the relocation of the well and sewer. The existing school does not have an indoor play space (gym/multi-purpose room) Physical education activities must be conducted outside,

which is a major problem especially in the cold, dark winter months. The size of the existing facility, constructed in 1941 has already resulted in overcrowded conditions.

The proposed 9033 sq. ft. new facility will include three core classrooms, a special education classroom, media center, multi-purpose room/gym, office, and required support spaces. The facility is essential to economically maintain a quality educational program in a safe and functional environment. The facility will be located at a different site, much farther from the eroding riverbank. The land has already been acquired and is not a part of the cost of the facility. In 1993 and again in 1997 the City of Upper Kalskag designated land for educational reserve, specifically for the construction of a new elementary school at Upper Kalskag.

The rebuilding of the Joseph & Olinga Gregory Elementary School in Kalskag has been listed as the top Capital Improvement Project by the Kuspuk School District Regional Board of Education since 1994. Present value of the J&O Gregory school, including generator building, is \$880,000.

The current problems with the school include the following:

The existing well for the school, which also serves as the main water source for the village, has been found to produce water with trace amounts of carbon tetrachloride, a known carcinogen. Although concentrations have been below the MCL (maximum contaminate limit) set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the presence of any carbon tetrachloride in the well is cause for concern. The existing well is less than six feet from an actively eroding riverbank and only 20 feet from the village cemetery. This erosion has, in the last twenty years, advanced hundreds of feet into the existing bank downstream of the school. The same erosive action could threaten the well in the near future.

The proposed water and sewer improvement project for Upper Kalskag includes a new well for the school. However, after careful analysis of the site, we found that the available locations for a new well are extremely limited. Only one site for a well was located that complies with ADEC required separations from the proposed sewer system, potential surface water contamination from the Kuskokwim River, and the existing school wastewater disposal system. The proposed well location is immediately adjacent to a cemetery which raises aesthetic, cultural and possible health concerns. The existing school site is also in a potential flood zone.

A larger site, further from potential sources of well contamination, flood hazard, and erosion, is needed. Additionally there is little room for the school bus to maneuver, forcing it to back up which causes a safety hazard to children and community members. There is no room between the school and the road, forcing children and pedestrians to walk on the road. There is no room for expansion at the present site. There is also no parking for faculty, staff or community, and people have to park on the road when visiting the school. The playground is also very close to the road, and is not fenced, with little separation from hazards and traffic areas.

There are also structural problems with the present building. The foundation is cracked. Exterior and Interior walls show signs of deterioration. Snow buildup is also a problem at the entrance area. The windows and doors are also in need of replacement and require high maintenance. There is no flexibility in interior design for variety of class sizes. Adequate light sources are borderline. The restroom facilities, which includes only a single toilet each for boys and girls, are grossly inadequate for student and staff needs. The drainage system and sewer is inadequate. There is no sprinkler system. There is no intercom system. There is a lack of electrical outlets and internet capability is sporadic. Interior surfaces are difficult to maintain and clean. The kitchen is only approximately 8x8; the milk machine is located in the hall and students have to eat in their classroom. Student bus loading area is not segregated from other vehicular traffic. There is no access road to school; the school is directly on main road.

Classroom space is limited so that there is no personal space in the classroom away from group instruction that allows privacy time for individual students. Storage for student and teacher materials is inadequate. There is no office space, no library, no separate space for individual counseling, testing, art, music, computer lab, remedial instruction, or working with small groups. There is no gymnasium or multi-purpose room. There are no student lockers, staff lounge or work area. There is no cafeteria and the kitchen is extremely limited with little storage space. The area is not landscaped and entrances are not sheltered from the weather. The building is often cold in the winter. There is no area for student socialization and the hallway is very narrow. All spaces are inadequate and crowded.

Alternatives to new construction have been considered including bringing in portable classrooms and alternative shifts at the high school.

The proposed school is a 9033 sq. ft. new facility. The proposed start date would be the 2005 construction season.

As stated previously, the current school site is quickly eroding and there is no room at the present location to expand the facility. The City of Upper Kalskag has designated a site for the construction of a new elementary school that will not be affected by erosion and will have room for expansion.

Also, as previously stated, the present site is adjacent to the village cemetery, has no bus or vehicle parking, has a contaminated well, and is in a flood plane. The building itself was originally constructed in 1941 and has undergone several remodels. Present space is totally inadequate for student and staff needs.